**New Communication Satellite**

71. SHRI RAMASHRAYA PRASAD SINGH : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up a new communication satellite in place of IRS-1D;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard till now; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) to (c) The next second generation INSAT satellite (INSAT-2E) is expected to be launched in the second quarter of 1998. However, even after INSAT-2E is launched, further augmentation of the INSAT space segment would be necessary to fill up the loss of capacity due to INSAT-2D failure.

The possibility of in-orbit acquisition/lease of transponder capacity for use in the INSAT system is being actively pursued.

***Ban on Recruitment***

*72. SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH : Will the* PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have given any instructions to the Departments to stop the special recruitment for SCs/STs;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to re-consider the decision;

(d) whether any representations have been received by the Government in protest of the issue;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the decision taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) and (b) The Government had been conducting special Recruitment Drives periodically to fill up the backlog of reservation for SCs/STs in direct recruitment. The Special Recruitment Drives were based on an instruction issued in 1989 which required "backlog" vacancies to be treated as a separate category to which the 50 per cent limit on reservation was considered inapplicable. The issue was examined in the context of a reference and it was found that the separate treatment of "backlog" vacancies was no longer legally permissible in view of the judgement of the 9-judge bench of the Supreme Court in the Indira Sawhney's case and the Special Recruitment Drives no longer legally feasible, as the total reservation including reservation for the OBCs cannot exceed 50 per cent. Accordingly, instruction had been issued to modify the 1989 orders.

(c) to (f) Representations have been received for withdrawal of the revised instructions. It has, however, not been found possible to accede to such requests in view of the law laid down by the Supreme Court as mentioned above.

**Import of Liquid Fuel**

73. SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK :
SHRI V.K. RAGHAVAN :

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased the state:

(a) whether the Government propose to import liquefied natural gas for power generation in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the impact of the recent hike in prices of natural gas on generation of power in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) Yes, Sir. In order to meet the growing demand for natural gas in the power and other sectors, the Government has decided to make efforts to import LNG.

(b) The Government has approved the formation of a Joint Venture Company (JVC) with GAIL, ONGC, IOC and BPCL having a total equity of 50% and the balance to be given to financial institution and others. This JVC is exploring the possibilities of setting up LNG terminals of about 2.5 million tonnes per annum capacity each at Enore (T.N), Cochin (Kerala). Hazira/Dahej (Gujarat) and Mangalore (Karnataka).

(c) The recent increase in prices of natural gas is expected to increase the cost of generation of power.

**Commonwealth Countries Meet**

74. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Heads of Governments of Commonwealth Countries at their recent conference has agreed to launch a fund for South Asia;